Increase in earth's temperature

466. SHRI ABU ASIM AZMI: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that Earth is hottest now in 400 years;

(b) if so, the adverse effects of rise of half a degree Celsius temperature during 20th century on Indian soil;

(c) whether the decrease of ground water level in India is the outcome of this rise of half degree celsius or other-wise; and

(d) the steps being taken by Government to increase the ground water level by tree plantation in the States?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) There is no specific study regarding adverse effects of increase of half degree Celsius temperature during the twentieth century on the Indian soil.

(c) The direct adverse effect of increase in temperature on ground water resources is not well established.

(d) The Government is promoting afforestation through Centrally Sponsored Scheme National Afforestation Programme, under which soil moisture conservation measures is one of the components.

Afforestation of unused land

†467. SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:
DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that 39 per cent of the country's geographical land, fertile or infertile, is lying unused;

(b) if not, the facts in this regard;

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.